THE PEOPLE.

"SALUS POPULI."

No. XIV. SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1817. [*Price Two-Pence.*

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

"*No freeman shall be any ways destroyed, nor will we pass upon him, unless by legal Judgement of his Peers.*"

MAGNA CHARTA.

CORRUPTION, *Bribing, Influencing, Buying and Selling;—Election Laws no remedy;—The Real Remedies,* UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE *and* ANNUAL PARIAMENTS;—*What* UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE *is;—Universal Suffrage of Universal Importance;—The Smaller the Property, the Greater the Necessity of Good Management;—The Labour of the Poor their Property, and a Property which entitles them to Suffrage;—The Necessity of Protection entitles them;—Natural Right entitles them;—What Slavery is;—Montesquieu's Two Kinds of Slavery;—The West Indian Slavery;—The English Labourer's Slavery;—Magna Charta;—Taxation without Representation;——Lord Chatham;——America;——Resistance;——Flagellation;—Publius's Letter on Borough-mongering;—"The Banks of the Barrow."*

In the last number I shewed "*who was the worst of Tyrants,*" and what must necessarily be the progress of that worst of Tyrants. I showed the *operation* of CORRUPTION, and how impossible it was that its *operation* should be any other. I showed how absurd it was to expect purity from essential iniquity, virtue from essential viciousness, good from essential evil. What is sown in rottenness will not be produced in soundness; for "*the corrupt tree bringeth not forth good fruit; neither of thorns do men gather figs,* nor of a *bramble-bush gather they grapes.*" But on the contrary, what is sown in rottenness will be produced in worse rottenness. Pollution ferments; putrefaction advances. What is begun in corruptly buying, whether with regard to public or private, government or individual concerns, will end in MORE *corruptly selling.* What is begun in CORRUPTION, will end in worse CORRUPTION. It will be "CORRUPTION worse corrupted." Bribing and influencing will end in depraving and oppressing. The purchaser of perjury will be the vender of perdition; the buyer of voters will be the seller of slaves.

If happiness and virtue then be considered "our being's end and aim;"—if we deem them objects of the first value, and would effectually seek them, we must seek what will effectually remove that which is essentially contrary and necessarily destructive to them.

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This we have seen to be that truly "worst of Tyrants," CORRUPTION.

But experience, that most forcible of instructors, has proved to us, that election laws, and treating laws are useless against him. We have found that they are not so much as cobwebs to the hornet. They never encompass him; they only faintly follow; he is always in advance of them, and only "laugheth at the shaking of their spears," for he finds their spears made only of paper. We may as reasonably expect to "draw out leviathan with a hook," or the whale with a single horse-hair, as to stop his career by our bribery and corruption laws. They have not proved to be even palliatives. They have not even abated the nuisance. Their multiplication is only a sign of his increase of strength. They are almost infinite at present; yet his strength is more infinite: his power and influence are greater than ever.

We must therefore try some other remedy, if we really wish to be sound.

But is there another remedy? yes; I say yes. UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE and ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS would be a most effectual remedy.

They would remedy at present, and prevent for the future. They would throw impossibility in the way of CORRUPTION; and impossibility is the most infallible preventive. Such an obstacle no exertions could surmount, no efforts could undermine, no subtlety could sap.

Why then do we not immediately embrace them? Have not the forty years' labours, of that truly venerable veteran, who ploughed the ground and sowed the seed of Reform—who may well be called the Patriarch of the Constitution,—the virtuous, the persevering, and the able Cartwright, been sufficient to convince us, that we have no other path of safety? Have not the yearly increasing want and wretchedness and blood and crimes of twenty-five years been able to remove every doubt on what would seem to be so clear, so simply evident? One would think, that such facts and arguments would have been sufficient to open the eyes of the most blind, the understandings of the most barbarous. May it not be said, that "if such mighty works, as have been done" here the last quarter of a century, "had been done in Tyre and Sidon," they would have taken counsel, and deserted the course of inevitable ruin?

Yet I am sorry to see that much prejudice is still felt, and much ignorance still exists on those vital questions. Even amongst those whom they would most immediately benefit, they do not seem to be fully understood. Even amongst what are called *the lower orders, the labouring classes,* they seem to be more desired as an experiment to remove the present calamity, than as a certain source of future good.

Amongst the *middling orders,* though from the pressure of their load the cry for REFORM is deep and loud, UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE and ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS are looked on with, at least, suspicion. Amongst the *higher orders,*—and not only amongst the higher in wealth and rank, but in learning and mental cul-

tivation (with of course some exceptions, as amongst the other classes) the very mention of them is hardly tolerated. They are called even by Romilley and Tierney wild, visionary, and impracticable. Brougham almost froths at the mouth at the bare idea of them. Yet with deference to such high authorities, and high authorities certainly Romilley and Tierney are (as are many others who join them, and are even louder in this epithetizing or quality-attributing mode of condemning than Ministers themselves are) I would prefer their usual course of treating a question. On few other subjects do they confine themselves entirely to declamation; but on those I must say, that not from even one of them did I hear any thing like argument or reasoning. The Marquis of Wellesley was the person of the Opposition, who spoke at greatest length, and said most of what resembled argument against them; yet I confess, even in what he said, I cannot see any thing like real substance, though I shall hereafter make some observations on what fell from him on the occasion.

Of the two subjects, however, UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE seems to be that against which the greater mass of prejudice exists, and which is the less understood. The consideration of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, therefore, I shall begin with.

First then let us see what is meant by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. By UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE is meant *universal voting* for persons to sit in parliament; that is, by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE every person, who is come to the years of maturity, and who has the use of reason, seeks to have a vote for a person to sit in parliament, as his substitute or representative, steward or attorney, to take care of his interests, and to guard the constitution under which he lives, and has, or should have his rights protected.

This is what is meant by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, and not, as many persons seem to conceive, that every person should vote personally in making laws. The proper and general understanding of this, would I am sure, remove a vast deal of prejudice on the subject, especially amongst the middle orders or classes, who seem to think that by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE it is meant to give every one the right of sitting in parliament, and to permit the ignorant or those who can scarcely be supposed to have sufficient means of information, to decide on the laws and on intricate affairs of policy.

The middling orders seem to think that by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE the lower orders claim what is inconsistent with the rights of every other order, as well as with their own situation. But by UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE the lower orders ask no such thing; they ask only to have a voice in choosing a person to take care of themselves and their rights; nor do they ask this exclusively for themselves, but they ask it universally for all.

UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE then is certainly a subject of *Universal*, and not only of universal, but of *the highest* universal importance.

It is of universal importance; because it is of importance to every person, to the poorest as well as the richest, the lowest as well as the highest, the weakest as well as the strongest, whether he has the steward or attorney of his own choice to manage his affairs, or must submit to have the steward or attorney of the choice of another forced on him.

It is of the highest universal importance, because the affairs, which the parliamentary steward or attorney has to manage, are affairs not only of property, but of liberty, morality, and life.

Now the rich man says he has a right to have a steward of his own choice to manage his large property for him, because as the property is his own, no body but the person of his choice can with justice assume the management of it. Surely then, though the poor man's property is small, as his right to that property, however small, is as great as is the rich man's to his large property, his right to have a steward of his choice to manage his small property for him, is as great as is the rich man's to have a steward of his choice to manage his large property can be. His small property is as dear to the poor man, as his large property is to the rich man; and the smaller it is, the greater is the necessity that it should be well managed. But who can think, that his property will be as well managed for him by a steward forced on him by the will of another, whose interests cannot be supposed to be exactly the same as his, as by a steward chosen by himself? Would the rich man be satisfied with a steward forced on him by the poor man; and why should the poor man be satisfied with the steward forced on him by the rich man?

But some persons will say, that the poor and labouring classes, or most of them have no property, and therefore have no need of any steward to manage for them. I however, say, they have some property; they have internal property, the source of all external property; they have labour, and they want a steward to take care that they are not deprived of all the produce of of this property—of all the fruits of their own labour. If they are not left the entire, they should at least be left a sufficient share of the fruits of their own labour to support them in tolerable comfort. They want parliamentary or legislative stewards to attend to this; and their not having such stewards is the cause why this is not attended to, as it ought to be. If they had such stewards, those who plough and sow would not be starving, while those who do not plough nor sow are living in luxury and profusion; the laborious bee, who collects the honey, would not be deprived of all that he gathers, while the drone who does nothing but buzz his idle song, is rioting on the sweets which he has no share in collecting. Can it not now be said most truly to those classes, "*Sic vos non vobis*," "*you work not for yourselves?*" But if they were represented in parliament as well as all the other classes in the community are, or rather were before the reign of CORRUPTION, this could not be said

to the really most useful, because the absolutely most necessary, of all the classes of society. There would be some proportion observed in the distribution of the produce between the productive and unproductive classes.

Besides the poor and the labouring classes have their lives and liberties, and they ought to have their happiness, to be protected; and for the protection of those they would want parliamentary stewards.

If property therefore be made a test, by which suffrage or voting in the election of members of parliament is to be allowed, the labouring classes have the most essential, and the most useful of all properties; and if necessity for protection be made the other test, the poor surely have this test in a much greater degree than the rich have, inasmuch as protection is more necessary for the weak than the strong.

But if we go back to the natural equality of mankind, and to original right, how can even a word be said against UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE? On what principle in this case can a shadow of opposition be raised to it? Surely nothing can be more contradictory to either this equality or this this right, than binding a man by laws, in the making or approval of which he has not, either by himself or his representative, any share whatsoever. What is this man but *a slave*, whether his slavery be more or less light, or more or less severe? *A slave* he is to all intents and purposes; for what else is a slave but a man bound by the will of others, whatever be his own will?

A person who must submit to what others dictate, cannot be said to have the power of acting in any manner according to his own will; and whoever has not the power of acting in any manner according to his own will, cannot surely be said or be thought to be free.

It is true his masters or those who make the laws which bind him, may not reduce him to either of the two kinds of slavery to which Montesquieu seems to think slavery confined. But they can do so if they wish it. They may not make him either "*a real or person slave;*"—they may not "annex him to the land, as in Bohemia or Hungary," or to domestic service" that is, to slavery about the house or in menial offices, as in several parts of Asia and Africa; but they can do so, if they consider it more for their own advantage. They may think it more to their own profit to exclude him from the land in every way, but in labouring on it; but he is not the less a *slave* for this. They can annex him to "the land, and to domestic service," and reduce him to what Montesqueiu thinks the worst degree of slavery, the combination of both, without his consent or even without consulting him, if they consider that his labour will yield them more in this sort of slavery, than in excluding him from the land and paying him what they please for his labour on it.

How therefore, can a person be counted not to be a slave, when he must submit to any laws which are made to bind him however contrary to his will or his interests, or without ever being consulted on them? But the labourer here, who is not allowed to vote

in the election of those who make the laws, is surely bound down by laws, on which he is never consulted, or to which he in no manner consents: what then can he be considered but a slave?

Nor indeed would it be difficult to prove, and I have in a former number proved it, that his *slavery* is worse than that of the West Indian *slave*, who is well fed, well clothed, well lodged and well attended to. Yes, thou man of humanity and friend of liberty, and thou voter for the suspension and re-suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, pious and tender-hearted Wilberforce! our labourer, who has no vote in the election of members of parliament, is in a worse *slavery* than that of the West Indian *slave*; for he is neither well fed, well clothed, well lodged, or well attended to, and he is subject to any laws, which others choose to make without ever in any way requiring his consent, or consulting him on them.

If, now, we recur to the Constitution, we shall see that any thing less than UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE is contrary to it. Without going farther back than to Magna Charta, which is only a declaration of some parts of the Saxon original Constitution, we shall find UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE recognized there, not indeed in name, but in reality. It is said there, "no freeman shall be any ways destroyed, nor will we pass upon him unless by the legal judgment of his peers." The meaning of "destroyed" here is not literally, "ruined," as is now understood by that word, but in any way molested, or deprived of any property. When, therefore, a man is taxed without consenting, by himself or his representative, to the tax, he is "*destroyed*,"—indeed, at present, too often literally *destroyed*, without "the judgment of his peers;" for those who make the laws, and those who have no share either personally, or by representation, in making them, cannot be said to be "peers" or equals. Those who make the laws, are, in such cases, *masters*, and those who have only to submit to them are *slaves*. But the English Constitution intends that every man should be free; and therefore it desires, that no man shall be taxed, or "passed upon," that is, have laws passed upon him, without "the judgment of his peers;" viz. without his consent by his representative.

This was what the illustrious Chatham understood by the passage quoted from Magna Charta, when he said, that he rejoiced that America resisted—in armed and hostile array,—in war and battle resisted, because she resisted what was unconstitutional, "*taxation without representation.*" But is not the English labourer, who has no vote in returning a Member to Parliament, and, of course, no representative, subject to *taxation without representation?* He is, as surely as America was before her glorious revolution; and if she was justified in open, armed and hostile resistance then, I see no reason, why the Englishman, who is under the same oppression now, and is also subject to have laws of imprisonment, bodily infliction, and death "passed upon him," without being represented, should not be justified in a like resistance?

(To be continued.)

In the next Number I intend to give the Speech from the throne on the prorogation of Parliament, and some observations on it.

PLAIN REASON.

The following few remarks I intended to prefix to the severe, though, I am sure, well intended and friendly attack of W.C. on me, and on the lower orders of the people, in the last Number; but, by some accident, my printer omitted them.

"I shall be happy if my Correspondent, W. C. can bring ubout "the consummation so devoutly to be wished for," even by scolding or yet biting the people; though I cannot agree with him that they are more blameable than their rulers. If he makes such allowances for the temptations of "*the men in high stations,*" he will, I hope, excuse me for making some allowances for the temptations of *the men in low stations.* Poverty and affliction I think are temptations, for which the friend of humanity should make greater allowances than for riches and power. As for my sarcasms against "the men in high stations," I own, when I see men, under the pretext of protecting Virtue, Religion, Liberty, and the Constitution, comitting the highest, blackest treason against them, and upholding not only by employing and paying, but by arguing and praising, the basest, vilest villains, the most abominable of the depraved, I can scarcely restrain myself. For every other crime I can make some allowance; but for hypocrisy, I can hardly find temper. Yet I would not punish even the hypocrite any otherwise than by words, in order to restrain him and deter others from following his example, and by removing him from his situation, in order to remove him from the power of doing farther mischief. I would also, indeed, make him repair, as far as in his power, the mischief he has committed already. Such punishment, I must think, the most placid philosophy, and the most merciful christianity would allow. If I do not wish the nettle to feel the same stinging pain it has given me, it is, at least, not unphilosophical or unchristian in me, to pluck it out of my garden, and not to leave it to give me, and my friends, or family, the same pain again."

PLAIN REASON.

BOROUGH MONGERING.

Publius to Plain Reason.

SIR,—That all the calamities the people of this country have suffered, and are now suffering, have been occasioned by their own inattention and negligence towards their own rights and liberties, by suffering the artful Borough-Mongers to buy up the votes for Members of the Commons House of Parliament by which means a corrupt majority of that House have sold the wealth, prosperity, and freedom of this once happy land to the enemies of justice and liberty, needs no demonstration. They, the people, have to thank themselves for their supineness, in allowing those who hate the very name of liberty, to undermine the Constitution, by insidiously worming themselves into power, and instead of becoming the faithful servants and protectors of their Constituents, to

become, by degrees, their unfeeling and unmerciful tyrants. On all former occasions, before the Borough-mongering System was carried on to such an alarming height, as of late, there was sufficient public spirit in the country gentlemen to resist it's encroachments; but since that promising Patriot, William Pitt, who so far deluded the people, as to make them believe they could trust to him as their faithful pilot, induced them to think that the French people, when struggling for freedom, were endeavouring to exterminate us as a nation, all public spirit seems to have vanished. When that arch apostate had persuaded the people, that they were reduced to the necessity of fighting for their existence as a people; when that subtile Minister had insinuated the idea, that we could have no "indemnity for the past, or security for the future, unless we turned all our attention and all our power to conquer the alarming strides of despotism, excited by the genius of France, in the person of one of the greatest military commanders the world ever produced;—when he had taught the people to think there could be no peace until we had subdued the "child and champion of Jacobinism;" and when the whole country was resounding with the glorious victories obtained by the invincible valour of our brave soldiers and sailors; when almost all the people were intoxicated with perpetual shouts of victory, they did not perceive that that they were overwhelmed with debt and taxes; they did not perceive that the debt was become too heavy to bear, without the strictest economy; and that a large standing army, joined to a long list of sinecures, pensions, &c. &c. &c. would produce poverty, distress, starvation, sickness, and mortality, among the lower classes, and bankruptcy and a long train of evils among the middle.

All these, and a thousand other concomitant evils, not only in this country, but in all the nations of Europe, proceed entirely from the supineness of the people, in suffering the Buying and Selling System, to pervert every just principle—to levy war on justice and liberty,—to demoralize the people,—to encourage the malignant passions, false swearing, and all kinds of wicked stratagems, to excite mischief, and then betray; and although many worthy writers and speakers foretold and warned the people of the consequences of the infamous and treasonable system; yet the people acquiesced, because they thought the ancient and virtuous nobles and gentry of the land, would exert themselves to prevent the ruinous proceedings from going too far to be remedied!

All those accumulated evils are the natural consequence of the easily duped people's trusting to the honour of the great. Is it not, then, become absolutely necessary for the people to assert their rights; and the question is, how is this to be done without violence? The first step toward a reformation, is to make the people understand their constitutional rights, which, from long neglect, have grown entirely into disuse. From gradual usurpations of the artful ones, the

people have been deprived of their elective franchise. The first bold step was in the reign of Edward the Sixth, when they made a law (on pretence of preventing *multitudinous* meetings), that none but *freeholders of forty shillings a year, and upwards*, should vote for County Members; and because the people did not resist the unjust usurpation at that time,—not foreseeing the consequence of quietly submitting to the insidious encroachment, further encroachments have, from time to time, been made, by granting royal charters, as it is called, to particular cities, towns, &c. for exclusive privileges to particular persons, to vote at elections, to the disfranchisement of all others, under the plausible pretext of rewarding these particular persons, or these particular places for some eminent service they had done for the state!

Now, as at first sight it appears just and reasonable that those who exert themselves for the public good should be rewarded for their public exertions, it was thought at that time, that these privileges were just and reasonable; but when we consider that these exclusive privileges could lawfully give these particular persons no more right than they were constitutionally entitled to before (except that of selling themselves), but practically excluded all others that had before an equal right with them to vote, it then became, instead of a reward in a just sense, a most infamous and traitorous injury, and a curse on after times. As, then, it is well known, that the King cannot constitutionally make a law, without the consent of the other branches of the Legislature, it follows, of course, that the royal proclamations and charters alone are not the laws of the land; and although the people may, in particular instances, submit or acquiesce, in some measure, for a short time, for some supposed general benefit; yet, it has always been held as an experiment only, to be rejected, or confirmed, as the Legislature should think meet. And further, too, although the Legislature may make laws even to repeal Magna Charta, or any thing that may be thought for the public good; or, any thing to regulate, or restrain, or circumscribe general liberty, for the general good; yet, it is preposterous to suppose that they can pass laws to deprive one part of the community of their just rights, and not another, that they can subject one part of the community to punishment for particular crimes, and not another;—or, that they can inflict a capital punishment on one part of the people, for a specific crime, and a less degree on another part for the same crime; for if the Legislature could pass such partial laws, what is to restrain it from passing a law to prevent a particular class of the people from buying any article of food, &c. in a market or other place, before any favoured person or class should previously consent, as is the case already with respect to game or prohibited goods. For if a person in ordinary life was to be convicted of smuggling prohibited goods, he would be severely punished for the same; but an ambassador and other great privileged personages may have those things without restraint.

I therefore contend, that if the

Legislature can pass partial laws in a few instances, there is no power but that of the whole people can say where they shall stop, or prevent them from enacting the most unequal and unjust laws! Hence it is manifest, that partial laws must be unconstitutional, and cannot be tolerated in a free government; and that all those laws that restrain a part of the people of England from voting at elections, are partial laws, of course, unjust, and ought not to be respected or regarded; and no returning officer at any election can constitutionally refuse the vote of any resident man who tenders his vote orderly and peaceably. Now, it must be clear to the meanest capacity that there is no possibility of stemming the tide of corruption, unless all the people do their duty; —unless they be resolutely determined to root out the greatest of all evils, the Buying and Selling System, the high treason against liberty; and, like true, free-born Englishmen, manfully assert their undoubted right of free-voting, which may be quietly and peaceably accomplished, if all the people are made sensible of their true, inestimable, inalienable, constitutional rights, which, from long disuse, have been obliterated from their minds, but which being brought into exercise, will root out infamy, and save the state from perdition. If the people will resolve to be free; if they will resolve to do only that which is just and right, with united hearts and minds, then, by the blessing of him that made us, we may ward off the impending evil, and begin to recover from the great calamities our long continued weakness and wickedness have produced. Oh! British people! I invoke you to be prepared for the next election; even though we are not to expect a dissolution of the present Parliament until after another Session, for which I am not very sorry, as the longer the people are acquainted with their proceedings, the more they will be convinced of their enmity to liberty; and the more time the people will have to prepare for an unanimous resistance to all corrupt proceedings, and the more time the true friends of genuine liberty will have, through the Independent Press, to make all the people sensible, that if corruption succeeds in gaining a majority in the next Parliament, all will be lost, you will be no longer a people, and convulsion, anarchy, unrestrained violence, and confusion will consequently ensue. Then it will be too late to wish they had sooner united to oppose the Borough Mongers, and even the Borough Mongers themselves, if they should consent to have a foreign military force called in, will soon repent their having done so; for who that reads the ancient history of England, can, for a moment, be insensible to the folly of trusting to a foreign force? It is the first duty, therefore, of every public writer, &c. to warn the people of their danger—to hold the mirror up, and open their eyes, that they may see the precipice they stand on; to point out their enemies, and shew their manœuvres, without which, their subtile attempts cannot be defeated. Hitherto our brave soldiers and sailors have only had to subdue a foreign foe; but now the

people have to encounter an insidious internal enemy, who has an undisturbed opportunity to observe all your motions and designs. He has not only free admission into your camp, but you give him free leave to take your property, and bribe your supposed friends to betray you. How much more difficult must it be, then, to subdue this internal foe, than an open foreign enemy, who has only his generalship and valour to oppose to your's. But justice, and the God of justice, will assist all those who wish only to "do as they would be done unto;" and if all the people should ever keep this maxim in view, they must be invincible, and all the workers of iniquity would soon be convinced, that "the voice of the people is the voice of God."

Up, then, Englishmen; gird on the "breast-plate of righteousness," and become true Christian soldiers! Let true religion and justice be your generals; let brotherly love be your band of union; let true Christian charity, and good will, with fervent persuasion, be your weapons to subdue your opponents; and let not even your enemies want for your intercessions to him who made us and them, that we may all be put in the right way to do his will. Let us learn how to subdue all our own inordinate passions. Let us learn the true art of governing ourselves, that we may be the more likely to convince others that private happiness cannot well be secured without public prosperity and stability. Let every one inform his poor neighbours, that the only way to secure the fruits of his industry to himself and family, is, by voting for worthy, honest, and independent Members to represent him in Parliament;—to be just and true to all mankind, and sincerely to trust in Providence for all which his unerring wisdom and goodness sees is best for us; that, as we are commanded to love one another, our best way to obtain our Creator's blessing is strictly to obey his commands; and the more we are convinced that loving one another is the best rule to go by, the more we shall be likely to be of one opinion, or nearly so.

But, as it is also likely that we shall always have to encounter those of perverse dispositions, we must be ever vigilant; and because those who are enemies to true goodness, know that public opinion, if against them, is sure to overcome them; they will, of course, make use of every kind of sophistry to poison and warp that opinion; and one of the most dangerous is, that of some of the best orators, and seeming friends of liberty in the Parliament, having roundly asserted, that universal suffrage would overturn the Constitution. Now, we have more to fear from pretended friends than open enemies; for, good-natured, credulous people, sometimes doubting their own abilities, give way to the assertion of those they have a high opinion of. But, if we look narrowly into the conduct of the elevated, although we may find some of them generous and honourable, yet, because of their learning and superior knowledge of the world, they see their advantage over the lower classes, which, if it do not make them despise the poor and illiterate; yet, it causes

them to hold their opinions as nothing, and also influences them to hold in contempt those instructors of the people they are pleased to denominate demagogues. But, if the learned and wise see the people are led astray, why do they not instruct them be ter? If those, who see such imminent danger from universal suffrage, would condescend to inform us where the danger lies, we should be much obliged to them; but as history does not record any mischief having ever accrued from too much liberty, we have reason to doubt their assertions, and to suppose they are not true friends of genuine freedom; and sad experience has taught us, that every abridgment of liberty has ever brought on endless calamities. Those great folks, who see all the arcana of politics, have never proved their superior wisdom. They have got us into infinite difficulties, and cannot shew us the way out. But common sense, and common abilities, with strict integrity, are the most likely qualities to extricate us from the alarming situation we are placed in by the extraordinary wise. There is but one way out, which is, straight forward. We must first remove the blind guides; and then, if the upper classes would condescend to unite honestly with the lower, the difficulty would be soon removed. If the higher classes would incline themselves to do justice to the lower, all may be soon rectified. But, if the higher will consider themselves as distinct from the lower, and consider their interests as distinct and their prosperity as quite different from that of their poor brethren, then we must not expect to prosper; for "a house divided against itself cannotstand." Pride, and haughtiness, and scorn, must be eradicated from the breast of the great ones; and they must consent to mix with the poor (I do not mean to lower their rank or true dignity, but to be friendly); they must condescend to ask the assistance of the labourer to help them to root out the buyers and sellers of seats in Parliament; or, they will find themselves in a situation like the officers of an army who should pretend to encounter an opposing army without the assistance of their men. A pretty sort of figure they would exhibit!

Oh, ye great ones! scorn not, then, the assistance of the little! You would do well to regulate and guide them; and then, with justice for *your* guide, you may overcome every difficulty. But if your pride will not let you ask assistance from the fountain of power, you will find yourselves deceived, and the people will find some among themselves who, by the blessing of Providence, will instruct them what to do; and it will be found that they will submit to nothing but justice. Why should they? They can do without you; you cannot do without them. Yet, they would rather live in harmony with you than otherwise. Be ye, therefore, the friends of the people, and do that which is right, and all will be well, and God will bless you all. Be ye, as you ought to be, the ornaments of the land. Let the King be the chief ornament; let him represent the true Majesty of the people; let him represent the true splendour and magnificence by acts of justice and magnanimity;—

by guarding the just rights and liberties of the people at home, and by vigilant watching, do justice and prevent injustice from abroad, and there can be no doubt but that the labouring people will not only support you, but they will respect and love you. They will willingly work for you, and even rejoice in your greatness;—they will do that from affection which all the wiles of power can never extort from them. Be ye all one people, from the prince to the peasant in kindness towards each other; but, preserve order and dignity; preserve rank and honourable distinctions! "Order is Heaven's first law;" and if you will but be kind and affectionate to the poor, the poor will reverence, esteem, and love you, and this constitutes the true strength, prosperity, and happiness of a nation!

Yet, notwithstanding all this is so clear, so self-evident, and so undeniable, Corruption has, notwithstanding, taken such deep root amongst the middle classes, that they have been so completely sophisticated as to be persuaded, that the lower classes are ripe for insurrection and plunder; and that the surrender of the Habeas Corpus is the best security for the remnant of property which the locusts of the state have left them. Even almost all the parsons of the parishes in England, that preach brotherly love and affection one towards another; that preach "peace on earth and good will towards men;" that recommend their parishioners to abstain from all inordinate designs after the Mammon of unrighteousness, and that charity to our poor brethren, and self denial, are the best Christian virtues,—even those parsons, with all their religion, are not, in general, friendly to free discussion, and the liberty of the people. They do not like controversy in any shape; they are mostly pleased with implicit respect; and though they may be very charitable, they do not cherish independency. In short, they possess the weakness and frailties of human nature, as well as other men; and therefore are as easily persuaded by a corrupt government, to do their endeavours to keep their flocks in subjection, by means of denunciations working on their religious fears, so as to second the views of artful, designing, arbitrary, and wicked Ministers.

But, is this the true way of governing according to true religion, justice, and equity? Are the people to be kept in subjection from fear of offending those in authority? Or, from the love of justice? Just as if the people should be inclined to be more obedient from their being deprived of their just rights, than they would from kindness and affection! The thing is impossible! They may as well preach the doctrine of "passive obedience and non-resistance," as that injuries and injustice will produce obedience and peaceful behaviour; sooner than just laws and impartial administration.

In the Greek and Roman states that boasted so much about freedom, personal slavery was tolerated by their laws. But, thanks to our glorious ancestors! vassalage has been abolished, and every British subject is born free. Will free-born subjects, then, suffer themselves to be deprived of their birth-rights, without a struggle? Surely

not. Every Commoner well knows he has an undoubted right to be represented in the House of Commons; and though corruption and sophistry has succeeded in frightening the middle classes, to consent to the suspension of their Personal Liberty, yet the whole people will not be so deluded; they will maintain their right to chuse their representatives, whether their superiors (as they are called), will join them or not. They will convince them that common sense is a match for their double refined sophistry, and they will save them from perdition, even against their inclinations. The people overthrow the constitution! The people destroy themselves! The true interests of all the people are inseparable. The fancied interests of some of the great ones are different from the general good; and therefore must be inimical to the public welfare. Abandon, then, ye over-wise, over-bearing, and over-reaching Politicians, abandon your cunning devices, and adopt a plain, honest policy, by which means you will be much more happy with much less trouble. Do justice to your poor brethren, and trust in Providence for the result!

There is one thing more essentially necessary for the whole people to know previous to a general election, which is a list of all the Members of the House of Commons, with a short account of their relations and connections, against each name; together with their dispositions, qualities, &c. and manner of voting on all great constitutional questions: that the people in general may know their true friends from their insidious enemies; and, if Major Cartwright, or any other independent and able person, would supply such a production, at a cheap rate, it would do an incalculable service to the public.

In speaking of the clergy in the foregoing, I do not mean to stigmatize or degrade them, in general; for I know many of them that are truly religious and benevolent, and do honour to humanity and the sacred function. I only mean to assert, that they, as well as other men, are not always proof against flattery and temptation; and, in general, like good livings, and to be reverenced and obeyed.

PUBLIUS.

July 7, 1817.

To the EDITOR of The PEOPLE.

FLAGELLATION.

Mr. Editor,

In the speech of Sir F. Burdett, the representative of Westminster, on Mr. Brougham's late motion respecting the state of the nation, the Hon. Baronet, is reported, in adverting to the notorious cruelties committed under the Irish government, at the period then referred to, to have very truly remarked, that the "*Grand Torturer*" had been made a Baronet, and taking into view passing events, that he (Sir Francis) should not be surprized if an Order of Spies were to be created, and a certain celebrated character, who has lately excited so much public disgust, should have the *Grand Cross.* This, Sir, leads me to enquire how far it would be expedient to establish a new Order of "*Torturers,*" viz. Grand Crosses — Commanders, — and Companions; to the end that all those *respectable* characters, possessing transcendant merits in this way, and who "*would be*" Grand Crosses, &c. &c. of this devoutly to be wished for New Order, might have an opportunity of submitting their *well established* claims to the dignities, to which they *so laudably* and so *honorably* aspire?

I am, Mr. Editor,
Your most humble Servant,
INQUISITOR NAVALIS.

14th July, 1817.

THE PAGODA BRIDGE.

To the Editor of "The People."

Sir,

I feel desirous to communicate to the Public, by medium of pour patriotic publication, a few thoughts which I hope will eventually be productive of so much good, as to lead, to the speedy accomplishment of the intended object.

I will endeavour Sir, to make my letter as brief as it properly can be. I think it must be admitted that *to traverse a ditch* it cannot be *requisite* to pass o'er a mountain; yet such is the obligation imposed on the people in crossing that ditch or *canal* in St. James's park. They must ascend six or seven grades or flights of steps, and of course *descend* as many. I will not argue on the absurdity of this obligation being imposed on the public; but proceed at once to *propose the remedy*, whereby the evil may be obviated, to the advantage of thousands of persons who have daily occasion, from business or inclination, to make that transverse section of the park. Let the bridge be *perforated* by an *archway*, as soon as the *first* flight is ascended, or at farthest the *second*. By this plan there would not be above eight or a dozen steps to be ascended on either side. This would save the trouble and fatigue of going over, by passing *through* the bridge. The breadth of the bridge is about nine yards; let the archway occupy five yards, and at each side let the flights of steps remain, and be two yards wide, with balustrades as far as requisite. By this plan an option would be given to the public to go *over* or *through*, as most agreeable. Let the apparatus for the perforation passage be made a kind of *iron cage* with a boarded floor; so that light would appear under the arch in a view of the bridge from east or west; and the people seen so passing the cage would be no great blemish, if any. At all events the real *convenience* that would result from what is here proposed should be deemed more than sufficient to counter-balance every opposite consideration, whether of expence or appearance.

The expence would not be much, suppose it were a thousand or more pounds, but my opinion is that much less would pay both for materials and labor to accomplish the *Pagoda Archway*. It is literally an archway, for it would be passing *longitudinally* through an arch, and an arched door or aperture at each side would lead to it.

The *utility* of it would be considerable in several respects, both for business, pleasure, and *health*.

I shall not trangress brevity by entering on discussion of those several topics. Common sense will be a ready advocate on behalf of the scheme.

Sir, I will not trespass on you further at this time, but with your permission, (as soon as convenient to yourself,) I shall be desirous to address a letter to *Lord Viscount Sydney*, as ranger of the park, on some matters well worthy of his attention, both on motives of political propriety, and polite attention to the citizens and gentry of London and Westminster.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient,
A SUGGESTER.

P. S. My next letter will contain a statement shewing that these suggestions come from me with as much *propriety* as from any person whatever; perhaps with more than from any one.

To the Editor of The PEOPLE.

Sir,

As you did me the favour to insert in your publication the little poetical extract on liberty which I sent some time back, I presume to ask the same favour for the following little poem, the subject of which is not entirely unconnected with politics, and the events of which may in the scale of possibility be at some future period imitated in some part of this country.

I am, Sir, yours
A CONSTANT READER.

THE BANKS OF THE BARROW.

The day-star through clouds faintly promised the morn,
And night retir'd slowly with many a tear,
When the accents of anguish bewilder'd and lorn
With the wild winds deep mingling, thus burst on my ear.
"Hush, hush, my life's darling, O hush child of sorrow!
"Still, still from this cold breast some food may'st thou borrow;
"Yet why should we wait the dread light of to-morrow;—
"Remains to us aught now, that we can call dear?

"Yes, where are thy father, thy sister, thy brother;
"And where are those friends, who our joys shar'd last night?
"Ah! have they abandon'd thy heart-torn mother
"To mem'ry, who constantly shews that dread sight?
"Why did we not fall, thou heart's Darling! before them,
"Or do we remain without use to deplore them?
"Nor prayers, nor anguish, nor tears will restore them,
"Nor a morning will hope ever more to us light.

"How bright smil'd last evening, it's views how unclouded,
"When ease and content shed their sweets round our hearth!
"Ah! who could then think, that so soon would be shrouded
"Each mild gleam of pleasure, and innocent mirth?
"Round the clear-blazing fire sat the group, oh! how cheerful!
"Of perils or evils, oh! how little fearful!
"The eye but with gladness or ecstasy tearful;
"Or when in full feeling thrill'd *Erin go brach.*"

"How could, Ye Barbarians! how could it be pleasure.
"How, how in destruction, how could you delight?
"O! my Mora, thou purest, thou innocent treasure!
"For this was it loveliness made thee so bright?
"O horrible! O than did a god! reign ever?
"Or such deeds from his sight could the veil of night cover?
"But happy, thou sleep'st in long peace with thy lover,
"Nor could'st thou live longer, nor would it be right.

"O my Cormac! and thus did'st thou see that lov'd daughter,
"Defenceless, unarm'd to bring her relief,
"And bleed with our boy, our brave Arth, in the slaughter?
"Nor spar'd was thy sire's age, nor mother's long grief.
"What pow'r then with strength, and with spirits suppli'd us,
"Or thro' Carlow's drear ruin's could madness right guide us,
"And why to the Barrow's banks now have we hied us?
"Can we hope, can we wish yet to scape the fierce strife?

"Even now I methinks, view the carnage fresh bleeding,
"And the shriek, and the shout, and the groan mix'd I hear!
"While horror on horror in ruin succeeding,
"Confusion gives up all to tumult and fear:
"The sword and the flame vie in wide desolation—
"O God!" wild she scream'd, in convuls'd exclamation,
"Stiff, stiff, O my own!—O my heart's last pulsation!"
Then she madly sprung on, and the wave was her bier.

The clear and argumentative letter of W. C. did not come to hand early enough for this week's publication. It shall certainly appear next week. The Spencean's, on the oppressive imprisonment of the Evanses, shall also appear. Many other communications are deferred for want of room.

A few copies of the last number, containing the forcible article on "WHO IS THE WORST OF TYRANTS" and the exquisitely beautiful poem "AN ENGLISHMAN'S DOMESTIC VIEW OF HIS POLITICAL SITUATION," printed on fine paper and hot pressed, are sold at one shilling.

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